

METHAMPHETAMINE TASK FORCE  
MEETING MINUTES  
July 25, 2006

In Attendance: Chair – Attorney General John Suthers

Vice –Chairs; Treatment – Janet Wood, Director, Behavioral Health Services,  
CDHS

Prevention – Jose Esquibel, Director, Interagency Prevention  
Systems, CDPHE

Law Enforcement – Lori Moriarty, Commander, Thornton Police  
Department, North Metro Drug Task Force

Don Quick, District Attorney, 17<sup>th</sup> JD; Carmelita Muniz, Director, Colo. Assoc. of Alcohol and Drug Service Providers; Rep. Bob McCluskey; Tara Trujillo, Colorado Children's Campaign; Dr. Kathryn Wells, Denver Health; Ted Trujillo, Director, Div. of Child Welfare, DHS; Dr. Nick Taylor, Taylor Behavioral Health; Dr. Wayne Maxwell, North Range Behavioral Health; Janelle Krueger, CDE; Bob Watson, District Attorney, 13<sup>th</sup> JD; Sheriff Stan Hilkey, Mesa County, Commissioner Janet Rowland, Mesa County, Erin Goff, Colorado Municipal League; Carol Poole, Director, DCJ; Sarah Ehrlich, Director, OCR; Brian Gomez, Div. of Adult Parole; Tom Quinn, Director of Probation Services; Judge Dan Kaup, 8<sup>th</sup> JD; John Karakoulakis, Governor's Office; Jeanne Smith, Deputy Attorney General

The meeting was opened by Chairman Suthers with introductions of the vice-chairs and roll call of members present. Chairman Suthers then read the charge to the committee from House Bill 06-1145. He announced the offer of funding to the task force from El Pomar Foundation. It was moved and seconded that the task force accept the funds in the amounts of \$12,500 for 8/1/06 to 12/31/06, \$25,000 for 1/1/07 to 12/31/07, and \$12,500 for 1/1/08 to 8/1/08. The motion passed unanimously. Carol Poole will assist in the administration of the funds which will go through the Department of Public Safety and be disbursed according to guidelines to be set forth by the task force in line with state fiscal rules. Other sources of funding including foundations and retailers will be pursued in the future.

Vice-chair Moriarty gave an overview of state and national efforts for Drug Endangered Children. Vice-chair Esquibel did the same for prevention and Vice-chair Wood reviewed treatment efforts. The presentations included statistical data and resources in other agencies.

Representing the local task force in El Paso and Teller Counties, Julia Roguski summarized their work thus far. Their group consists of children's services, law enforcement, and community representatives. They have developed "best practice" standards for dealing with children exposed to methamphetamine, using ADAD and other materials. The task force has coordinated efforts with the local model court handling dependency and neglect cases. This cooperation has resulted in a "48/7" standard which gets persons their first treatment contact within 48 hours and a second visit with 7 days.

Janet Rowland and Sheriff Hilkey presented a summary of the task force work in Mesa County. They began their task force in 2004, collecting data which became the basis for their white paper. Copies of this document can be obtained on line at [methfree.mesacounty.us](http://methfree.mesacounty.us). Mesa County reports about 80% of jail inmates admit to being high on meth at the time of their arrest. 53% of respondents reported using meth prior to age 19. Most of the meth is coming in from Mexico rather than being produced locally. Local law enforcement partners with DEA to form a drug enforcement task force. The county is breaking ground shortly on a 3-story facility which will include a 48 bed treatment center for drug addiction. This choice was made by the commissioners to address the methamphetamine problem. Mesa County has started family support groups for those dealing with addicted family members.

Mesa County is partnering with the Lions Club to present an education program called Lions Quest in the schools. This program is recognized by SAMHSA and promotes healthy lifestyles. The task force has sub-committees dealing with other issues like safety and lab clean-up. They are also addressing issues faced by foster parents dealing with children coming from meth-exposed homes. The only paid position on the task force is a coordinator whose job is to seek grant funding for their initiatives. 20 people are on their executive committee with 60 to 70 attendees at the larger task force meetings.

A perspective on addiction treatment and recovery was presented by Tina, who has been addicted for about 11 years and will graduate from the Drug Court program. She described manipulating prior programs into thinking she was drug free, providing fake urine samples, and hiding the fact that she was dealing. She has had parental rights terminated to one child but now has custody of her daughter and her twins. She has been drug-free for 11 months and is in a program that she feels is very beneficial. Tina stated that she had to reach her own point of realization that drugs were not how she wanted to live her life, and then seek treatment. Prior to that point, she was not receptive. She believes that family members and friends have a tremendous influence on attitudes toward treatment and that a family member who pays attention and listens can be the most significant key to addiction recovery.

Vice-chair Esquibel gave an overview of current data categories that are being collected in Colorado. Consumption, treatment, prevention, and law enforcement data is available. Mr. Esquibel requested that suggestions for certain types of data collection that would be helpful to get a picture of the meth problem in Colorado be forwarded to the committee. These suggestions can be sent to Jeanne Smith at the Attorney General's office, [jeanne.smith@state.co.us](mailto:jeanne.smith@state.co.us) for dissemination to the committee. It was mentioned that Rocky Mountain HIDTA (High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area) may be available to collect more law enforcement data.

The task force took a break at 11:00 for a press conference and resumed at approximately 11:45.

Upon reconvening, Chairman Suthers led the discussion of next steps for the task force. Jose Esquibel was appointed to lead the subcommittee on data collection and Lori

Moriarty was appointed to lead the subcommittee investigating funding. They are responsible for recruiting members from within and outside the task force. Other members pointed out the need for clear direction for the subcommittees and including members currently not represented on the task force, such as retailers, Employee Assistance Programs, and others. Dr. Taylor pointed out that private entities, such as the coal mine operations on the western slope, have an interest because they are required by OSHA to test employees but then have few resources to deal with the problems that show up in the testing. They may be good partners as the subcommittees move forward. It was also discussed that the task force needs to be aware of organizations that may be interested in participating for motives other than the advancement of meth awareness and response. The subcommittee chairs will be watchful of that issue.

A recurring comment for next steps was that the task force must be aware of the diversity of Colorado in ethnicity, geography, and resources. Bob Watson expressed a concern that programs may sound promising on paper but not translate well to rural areas if the individual has to drive several hours to reach a treatment center. He suggested utilizing technology to provide access in rural and frontier parts of the state. There was discussion that there cannot be a "one size fits all" best practice. Janelle Krueger emphasized that successful programs have to be initiated by and for a local community, rather than dictated to a community from the outside.

Other thoughts on next steps include:

- Possible presentation on what treatments services can provide.
- A guidebook, or toolkit, with information on things such as best practices, standards, best strategies for coordination of law enforcement and social services, and data facts.
- Consider placing resources on a central web-site. Possible link on the Attorney General's web site.
- Take a systemic, big picture approach with the intent to also address operational aspects.
- Keep in mind the concept of return on investment.
- There already exist guides on community collaboration, we would need to catalogue these and make this information available to counties.
- Communicate our messages to our respective networks.

The task force adjourned at 12:30 with the next meeting set for September 12 at 10:00. Lunch will be provided as the meeting is expected to last until approximately 1:30.